Selection of Text Books

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, I move "*That this Council recommends to the Goernment not to prescribe as text books those books in which the members of the Board of Studies have any pecuniary interest.*"

Sir, the question of prescribing text books in our schools is one of the most vexed questions that had come before this Council. I think from the very beginning of this Council we had been hearing a series of complaints about the working of this committee and I do not think there was any single year in which the scandalous way in which this department was being worked was not discussed in this House. In those days it was more a complaint that the Government were unduly interfering with the discretion given to the Text Book Committee and Board of Studies. Subsequently as a result of the agitation carried on in this Council of the way in which this department was being worked the Government appointed a committee and that committee made certain recommendations in accordance with which the present Text Book Committee and the Board of Studies have been constituted. Rules were also framed which were intended to check the misuse of the powers that have been conferred upon those authorities. In fact we find a marked change in the constitution. I find one change in the constitution of the bodies that existed before the reform and after it. It is this. Formerly before the report of the committee there were very few text book writers—in fact there was practically none in the Text Book Committee or the Board of Studies. Subsequent to the reconstitution of this Committee, we find a good number of text book writers both in the Board of Studies and in the Text Book Committee and as a result we find a good number of books are prescribed without any regard to the merits of those books. What happens is this. One member of the committee would recommend a certain book in return for the other member giving his approval to his book. It was a sort of "Tickle me Tobby, I will tickle thee". In addition to this there were the publishers behind these people—behind these book writers. They happen to be influential men. They will use all sorts of influence to get their books prescribed. I have not much objection there being text book writers in the Text Book Committee. It is not so harmful as in the case of the Board of Studies. The Text Book Committee only approves books and the Board of Studies selects from them and prescribes them as text books and sends them to the Government for their approval. The confirmation by the Government is practically done as a matter of course. After the re-organisation of this Department, there was another change also. Instead of the Inspector of Schools, the Director was made the President of the Board of Studies. It so happened that almost all the members except one non-offi-

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

cial member, Mr. Seethi, were his subordinates. Mr. Seethi could not make it convenient to attend the meeting. It so happened last time that the Director and his three subordinates sat together and prescribed the text books. Questions were asked in this Council protesting against the way in which the members prescribed their own books. I am reminded of the story of the monkey in the parable who, as arbitrator, appropriated the whole bread to himself. Now what happened was each one appropriated as many books of his own as text books as was possible by accommodating each other.

Mr. K. Ayyappan.—Your analogy is not very proper.

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—Sir, it may or may not be so. But the fact is there. They are asked to select books. They selected their own. I can give you a concrete example if you want. My friend Mr. Pettah has tabled a Resolution that as primary education has become very costly in these days, steps should be devised to make it less costly. My friend wanted to suggest certain reduction of text books and other things. What happened last year was Mr. Karuppan had written a series of poetry books. It is not obligatory that they should be prescribed for the primary classes because in their regular text books poetry pieces are incorporated. But in spite of that books containing sixteen pages of printed matter were prescribed and sold for 2¼ annas each. There are thousands and thousands of primary students who have to purchase them and very often some of them will have to purchase four or five books every year. I can cite another instance. I hope I am not disclosing any secret when I say that there were a series of Malayalam readers and one of the series that were unreservedly and without any modification approved by the Text Book Committee was the book written by an eminent writer, His Highness the Appan Thampuran. It so happened that H. H. the Appan Thampuran or the gentleman who published then was not in the good books of the authorities concerned who prescribed the books. So they had to find out a substitute. I am very sorry the Hon'ble Member for Education is absent. It is unfortunate that I have to state all these facts in the absence of the Hon'ble Member for Education. But I have to do it now because the term of the present committee is coming to an end. I think this is the time for reconstituting the Committee and If I miss this opportunity there may not be any chance for in proving matters for the next three years. Therefore I am rather reluctantly compelled, to move this Resolution at this particular stage. I was saying that they did not want to prescribe H. H. Appan Thampuran's books. There was not another complete single series available that was approved by the Text Book Committee. What happened

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

was this. The first four books of one series were and three from another series' and written by another man were prascrilad. This was an unheard of thing. One person in the Committee had directly or indirectly an interest in those books. As a matter of fact if no ulterior motive was there, they could very well have prescribed the text books written by that eminent author. But unfortunately these are the days of Messrs. V. Sundara Ayyar and Sons. Mr. Paul has become out of date. Appan Thampuran's Books happened to be printed by Mr. Paul. His days were over. These are some of the things that occurred there. I know from a reliable authority, from a member of the Board itself that they refused to prescribe a book on the simple ground that the get up of the Book was not satisfactory. What harm was there to prescribe it if the matter contained in that book was alright? They could have asked him to print the book on good paper and otherwise improve the get up. I do not think the Director of Public Instruction, the President of the Board, would be able to deny these facts. This Committee had to disallow the Book because the get-up was not good !!

Dr. A. R. Menon.—By whom was it published ?

Mr. E. Ikkanda Warriar.—It was published by a gentleman who had no influence whatever with the authorities concerned. These are but some of the things that are taking place in that august body. We thought that by putting the Director of Public Instruction in the place of the Chief Inspector who till then was presiding over the destinies of this institution, the conditions would improve and he would exercise his powers to manage the whole thing avoiding the scandals said of it. But unfortunately I regret to have to submit that the scandals that we heard about the Text Book Committee and the Board of Studies still remain there in spite of the change in the constitution and the personnel. Probably on account of the competition between these text book writers and publishers we are able to know some of these scandals. It is high time that the Government should know all these matters and act in the matter. It will not be very difficult for the Government to get four or five literary men who will be above all suspicion for this Committee. There will absolutely be no difficulty to get men of the right sort. We managed to select good books without the help of the text book writers. Formerly there were only the Chief Inspector and some Head Masters of Schools and one or two non-officials in the Committee. But now we find that a good number of them are pandits and book writers. My submission is that the change does not add to the efficiency of the selection Board. Under these circumstances, I would strongly recommend to the Government to accept this Resolution and reconstitute the

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

whole body to avoid similar troubles in future at least. In fact I regret to say that this placed power which has a good deal of patronage behind it has been very shabbily abused by the persons who had been entrusted with its management: Had it not been for that, I would not have brought forward this Resolution.

മിസ്റ്റർ പി. കുമാരനെഴുത്തച്ഛൻ.—സാർ, ഈ പ്രമേയത്തെ പിൻതാങ്ങുന്നതിനു് എനിക്കു് അതിയായ സന്തോഷമുണ്ടു്. ഈ പ്രമേയത്തിൽ പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ള വിഷയം ബോർഡു് ഓഫ് സ്റ്റഡീസിന്റെ രൂപീകരണത്തെ സംബന്ധിച്ചുള്ളതാണു്. അതായതു പെറിയ കുട്ടികൾ പഠിക്കേണ്ടതായ പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ ഇന്നിന്നവയാണെന്നു തീച്ചയാക്കുവാൻ അധികാരമുള്ള സംഘക്കാരിൽ പുസ്തകം വിറ്റു് അതിൽനിന്നു കാശുണ്ടാക്കുവാനിടയുള്ള ആളുകളുണ്ടെങ്കിൽ അതു വയ്യാ എന്നാണു് ഈ പ്രമേയത്തിൽ പറയുന്നതു്. അതിനുള്ള കാരണങ്ങളെക്കുറിച്ചു് അവതാരകൻ പറഞ്ഞിട്ടുള്ളതിൽ നിന്നു് ചിലതെല്ലാം നല്ലവണ്ണം മനസ്സിലാക്കേണ്ടതായിട്ടുണ്ടു്. ഫ്രാവു-ലെ ഒരു ഗസറ്റിന്റെ ഒരു ഭാഗമാണു് എന്റെ കയ്യിൽ കാണുന്ന ഈ കടലാസ്സു്. കഴിഞ്ഞ ബോർഡ് ഓഫ് സ്റ്റഡീസ് മീറ്റിങ്ങിനശേഷം ഇന്നയിന്ന ക്ലാസുകളിലേക്കു് ഇന്നയിന്ന പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ ഇത്രകൊല്ലത്തേക്കു നിശ്ചയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നു എന്നു തീരുമാനിച്ചിട്ടുള്ള ഒരു ലിസ്റ്റാണിതു്. അതിലെ ചിലഭാഗം ഞാനിവിടെ വായിക്കാം.

I. Form III പ്രബോധിനി 7th Reader by K. P. Karuppan and K. Narayana Menon 8ണ. 3 കൊല്ലം.

II. Form II പ്രബോധിനി 6th Reader by K. P. Karuppan and K. Narayana Menon 7ണ. 3 കൊല്ലം.

III. Form I പ്രബോധിനി V Reader by K. P. Karuppan and K. Narayana Menon 6 ണ. 3 കൊല്ലം. അതെ, ഇദ്ദേഹം മിസ്റ്റർ കരുപ്പൻ ബോർസ് ഓഫ് സ്റ്റഡീസിൽഒരംഗമാണു്. ലിസ്റ്റ് കഴിഞ്ഞില്ല, ഇനിയുമുണ്ടു്. മുമ്പു പറഞ്ഞതെല്ലാം ഗദ്യപുസ്തകങ്ങളാണു്. ഇനി പദ്യപുസ്തകങ്ങളുടെ ലിസ്റ്റു്.

IV. Form III കൈരളീകൌതുകം Part III 4 ണ. മൂന്നു കൊല്ലത്തേക്കു്.

V. അതേപുസ്തകം തന്നെ Part II Form II $3\frac{1}{2}$ ണ. 3 കൊല്ലം.

VI. Part I Form I 3 ണ. മൂന്നുകൊല്ലം.

VII. ബാലബോധിനി പാട്ടു് III, നാലാംക്ലാസിലേക്കു്, by K. P. Karuppan $2\frac{1}{2}$ ണ. മൂന്നു കൊല്ലം, VIII. മൂന്നാംക്ലാസിലേക്കു് പാട്ടു് II, 2ണ. മൂന്നു കൊല്ലം, IX. രണ്ടാംക്ലാസിലേക്കു്, പാട്ടു് I, രണ്ടണ, മൂന്നു കൊല്ലം, ഇങ്ങനെ ൯ പുസ്തകങ്ങളാണു് ഈ ഒരംഗത്തിനു പണലാഭമുള്ള വ പ്രിസ്ക്രൈബു് ചെയ്തിട്ടുള്ളതു്. ഇതിന്റെ വിലയോ? ഏറ്റവും കുറഞ്ഞ ഒരുപായ കടലാസ്സു് ഇങ്ങനെ മടക്കി (മടക്കി കാണിയ്ക്കുന്നു) ഏറ്റവും ചെറുതാക്കിയതിനാണു് രണ്ടരയണ, ൨ണ., ൪ ണ.,

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly

പ്രകാരം വാങ്ങുന്നതു്. എന്താണു് പുസ്തകങ്ങൾക്കു് ഇത്രയധികം വില വാങ്ങുന്നതെന്നു ഞാൻ മുമ്പൊരവസരത്തിൽ ചോദിച്ചപ്പോൾ ഗവമ്മെണ്ടിൽനിന്നും മറുപടി പറഞ്ഞതു് കടലാസിനല്ല വില, അതിൽ അടങ്ങിയ സത്തിനാണു് എന്നു പറഞ്ഞു. അങ്ങിനെ പറഞ്ഞതു വലിയ സാഹസമായിപ്പോയി. പണ്ടിറ്റ് കറുപ്പൻ എഴുതിയ രത്നങ്ങൾക്കു് ഇത്ര ചുരുക്കം വിലയോ? കടലാസിന്റെ വിലയും അച്ചടിക്കൂലിയും കൂടി നോക്കിയാൽ അരയണ തികച്ചു് വിലവയ്ക്കുവാൻ പാടില്ല. ഇങ്ങിനെയാണു് പുസ്തകങ്ങളും അവയുടെ ചാഞ്ചും നിശ്ചയിച്ചിരിക്കുന്നതു്. മുമ്പു ഗവമ്മെണ്ടിൽ നിന്നു നിശ്ചയിച്ചിട്ടുണ്ടായിരുന്നതു് ഗദ്യപുസ്തകങ്ങളിൽ പദ്യപാഠങ്ങൾ ഉള്ളപ്പോൾ പ്രത്യേകിച്ചു് പദ്യപുസ്തകം വേണ്ടെന്നാണു്. ആ നിശ്ചയത്തിനെതിരായിട്ടു് ഒരു മിട്ടുക്കൻ പദ്യപുസ്തകങ്ങൾ പ്രത്യേകമായിട്ടു് കൊണ്ടുവന്നുവച്ചു. എന്നിട്ടു് ഫ ഫ ഠ ന ഇടവത്തിൽ എത്തിയപ്പോൾ പദ്യപുസ്തകം വേറെ വേണ്ടെന്നു തീരുമാനിച്ചു. ഫ ഫ ഠ വ-ൽ ആയപ്പോൾ മിസ്റ്റർ കറുപ്പന്റെ ആറു പദ്യപുസ്തകം നക്ഷാസുകളിലേക്കും വെറും പദ്യകൃതികൾ മാത്രം അടങ്ങിയവ എങ്ങിനെ സ്വീകാര്യമായി? ഫ ഫ ഠ-ലെ ഡയറക്ടരുടെ വിധി എങ്ങിനെ മാറി? മനുഷ്യന്റെ സ്ഥിതിക്കു് സാധാരണ ഒരു ചാഞ്ചല്യമുണ്ടു്. ആ നിലയിൽ ബോർഡ് ഓഫ് സ്റ്റഡീസിലെ മറ്റംഗങ്ങൾ നമ്മുടെ കറുപ്പനല്ലേ; അവർ നല്ല യോഗ്യനാണു്; നല്ല പണ്ഡിതനാണു്; അദ്ദേഹത്തിന്റെ കൃതികളിൽ നിന്നു് അദ്ദേഹത്തിനും കുറച്ചു പണം കിട്ടിക്കൊള്ളട്ടെ എന്നനിലയിലായിരിക്കും ഈ പുസ്തകങ്ങളെല്ലാം സ്വീകരിച്ചിട്ടുള്ളതു്. ടെക്സ്റ്റ് ബുക്ക് കമ്മിറ്റിക്കാരുടെ പരിശോധന കഴിഞ്ഞു സ്വീകരിക്കപ്പെട്ട വേറെ പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ ഇരിക്കുമ്പോഴാണു് ഈ പുസ്തകങ്ങൾ പ്രിസ്ക്രൈബ് ചെയ്തതെന്നു സ്മരണീയമാണു്.

The House rose for the day at 5 p. m.

C. J. MATHEW,
Secretary to the Council.

LIBRARY ARCHIVES Kerala Legislative Assembly